



Community Hubs Project delivered by: Community Council of Devon  
Exeter Community Initiatives,  
Devon Association of Community Buildings

## COMMUNITY HUBS – Case Study

We would like to share the success stories of Community Enterprises across Devon who are successfully delivering a range of services and facilities to their community. To do this, we are gathering brief case studies of good practice to illustrate our training resources and website.

This is an invitation for your community enterprise to become an exemplar case study. **A chance to celebrate and receive the recognition that your work deserves!** In return for your contribution we will provide one year's **free membership** to the Devon Association of Community Buildings (worth £40 - £75).

To supply us with your case study, please fill in the following form, using short sentences in plain English, and without acronyms or jargon. Bear in mind that other communities might want to follow your lead or replicate any top tips you might be happy to share. They may also want to contact you directly to discuss further queries they may have -please indicate whether you are happy for us to share individual's contact details.

**Once complete, please email the form, and any photos you have which illustrate the project to: [dawn@devonrcc.org.uk](mailto:dawn@devonrcc.org.uk) or [charlotte2@devonrcc.org.uk](mailto:charlotte2@devonrcc.org.uk)**  
**If you have any queries please contact Dawn Eckhart or Charlotte Weedon at CCD**  
**Tel: 01392 383443**

Note:

Word counts given are estimates although we know that to be useful, we need to keep the information as concise yet as informative as possible.

**Please type in the shaded boxes which will expand as you type.**

**Name of Community Building / HUB:**

Spreyton village hall working with Spreyton village shop

**Where based (village, parish):**

Spreyton

**Description of exemplar services / facilities provided:**

Hall hire for weddings , parties social events , parish council meetings

Sport court for badminton and other evening fitness classes

School use for PE

Church services

ICT classes

Venue for village clubs such as: Toddler Group, gardening club, Good Companions, WI and many more

Provided space adjacent to their car park for the Spreyton Village Shop

## Project leaders and contact details (email and / or telephone number):

(are you happy for this info to be shared with other community buildings volunteers/managers?)

Yes or No?  Yes

Name: Chairman of Spreyton Village Trust – Tony Talbot  
The Barton, Spreyton, Crediton, Devon.

Spreyton Village Shop Committee - Roo Haywood Smith or Nick Jewell

Contact details: Spreyton Village Shop, Spreyton, Crediton, Devon, EX17 5DP  
[info@spreytonvillageshop.co.uk](mailto:info@spreytonvillageshop.co.uk) or 01647 231711

## Website address:

[http://www.spreyton.org.uk/community\\_shop.htm](http://www.spreyton.org.uk/community_shop.htm)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4iJSepOPdUA>

**THE CHALLENGE: 100 word max** *What were the challenges your community was facing which your project has helped to address? What does your project achieve or hope to achieve? What **difference** do people in your community experience as a result of the project?*

In July 2007 due to unforeseen circumstances Spreyton lost its village shop and with it a sense of community and its only retail outlet. The Spreyton Village Trust stepped in and offered the village hall as a venue for an Outreach PO two afternoons a week. This, however, was not a long-term solution and in early 2008 a group came together to scope the commercial viability and options of creating a community-owned shop for Spreyton. The challenge was to raise the money and manage the project with volunteers.

**DEVELOPING THE IDEA: 80 words max** *Where did the idea start, who was involved, what was the background that led to the need for your project?*

The Spreyton shop group together with the hall explored the options and feasibility of a community shop. Initial suggested locations included the shop within the hall, or in the pub car park. Parking was a key issue so the hall site was preferable but there were concerns about detracting from the hall as a wedding venue if the shop were integrated so the shop eas leased a plot of village hall land next to the car park.

**MAKING IT HAPPEN: 300 words max** *What processes were involved? Meetings? Committees/organisational structures? Consultation? Funding? Support from outside agencies/other expertise?*

A committee was formed and areas of responsibility clearly defined, key advice was sought from the Plunkett Foundation and other community-owned shops (COS). The committee visited COS, particularly those in small, rural villages to determine the critical success factors and best practice. It investigated funding sources and compiled responses from a village-wide questionnaire a village meeting. It utilised the financial paperwork of the former shop to write a business plan and came up with a project plan pulling all the strands of work together: the build (including the internal fit), people, finance, retail and buying, legislation and marketing/PR. The project was assisted by 3 days advisor time through the Store is the Core programme. Secured funding from ViRSA (£20k) and a loan from the Cooperative and Community Bank (£20k); secured a further £43k from the Local Enterprise Action Fund. Engaged the Parish Council, WDBC, DCC and local councillors. Registered as an IPS. Wrote a

constitution. Signed a lease and wrote an MOU with the Village Hall committee. Designed a building and was granted planning permission. Went out for tender to local builders. Engaged a Quantity Surveyor to run the build. Designed the internal fit (shelves and chillers). Spoke with EHO and other local council officials. Negotiated with the PO. Determined the initial stock lines and sourced suppliers. Appointed a part-time Manager. Scoped various EPOS systems. Trained the volunteers, wrote a Staff Handbook, stocked the shelves and opened a shop!

Throughout engaged with and canvassed villagers, and then sold shares (@ £10). The Committee changed during the project but the overall mission stood. The shop opened on 16 Jul 2010 within £500 of our £105k budget.

When we didn't know the answer we found someone who did – many people were happy to help a community project.

**KEEPING IT GOING: 80 words max** *How is your project being sustained into the future? What will be needed to help this happen?*

We have a part-time manager, funded by a grant, this will enable us to establish much-needed continuity and set up best practice in the shop with robust simple procedures that can withstand a high throughput of volunteers (up to 45/week)

Put simply: the Committee have created a shop for the village –the village must make it work:  
by volunteering – many hands really do make light work  
by using it – shopping locally is not more expensive  
by adding value and enjoying it

**TOP TIPS: bulleted – ten points max** *What have you as project co-ordinators/managers learned along the way that you feel other communities could benefit from – any suggestions which will help others to avoid pitfalls and missed opportunities?*

A well-structured committee (optimum 8 members), who are competent, determined and resourceful. Have others as part of sub-groups if needed. Don't rely on just a few people.

Key to the committee is a good 'finance' man: must be experienced with business plans and the assumptions that underpin the figures.

Ascertain what the village wants: questionnaires, canvassing, set up a stall at all local events and engage with people to work out what is needed in *your* village.

Be realistic about what you plan to achieve – it must be in proportion to the village. Come up with a project plan to pull the strands of work together in a timely, coordinated manner.

May need cashflow (we needed £20k) to be underwritten by locals/committee (as some funders pay in arrears)

Ensure you engage key partners in the project: locals, local businesses, local government and the *Plunkett Foundation*. The shop committee worked closely with the village hall, the PC, WDBC, DCC and our local MP. The project would have been nigh-on impossible without the Plunkett Foundation.

Fund a part-time manager from the start: reduces the volunteer workload, provides continuity establishes best practice from the outset.

Know (or learn) where you need professional help and employ someone.

Carry people with you, manage your internal village marketing sensitively, say thank you and maintain goodwill.

Stick at it – its hard work but rewarding. Be positive.

**WHAT WOULD YOU SAY YOUR THREE "CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS" HAVE BEEN?: 25 words max**

A dedicated, enthusiastic committee working with other village organisations

Assistance from the Plunkett Foundation (other community-owned shops) and other similar organisations (LEAF/CEU)

Enough volunteers.

**Submitted by:**

**Mrs Roo Haywood Smith  
Chairman  
Spreyton Village Shop Committee**

**Date:**

**7 October 2010**

On behalf of Devon Consortium.  
Part of the Stronger communities  
Programme funded by Devon  
County Council



**TIME TO SHARE & SUPPORT OTHER GROUPS!**